

Scottish Realism and the D&H (Part 2)

S. Robert Powell

A large number of the leaders and key figures in the history of the Delaware and Hudson Canal Company and the Delaware and Hudson Railroad in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries were either Scots by birth or of Scottish descent and subscribed to the common sense philosophy of Scottish realism.

Part 1 of this article was presented in the April 2025 issue of this publication. Presented here is Part 2 of that article.

Presented here are brief biographical statements about more remarkable Scots who worked for the Delaware and Hudson Canal Company and/or the Delaware and Hudson Railroad in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries:

THOMAS DICKSON: Born at Landerdale, Scotland, March 26, 1824, died at Scranton, July 31, 1884. On January 1, 1860: the coal and railroad departments of the D&H Canal Company separated and Thomas Dickson, at age 36, was appointed Superintendent of the Coal Department. He served in that capacity until 1864, when he was named head of the newly created office of General Superintendent of the Delaware and Hudson Canal Company, and served in that capacity for 7 years. In 1867 he was named Vice President of the Delaware and Hudson Canal Company. In the summer of 1869, he was named President of the Delaware and Hudson Canal Company, and he served as D&H president for 15 years (1869-1884).

JAMES and ELLIZABETH DICKSON: James and Elizabeth Dickson were the parents of Thomas Dickson, the president of the Delaware and Hudson Canal Company, 1869-1884. James was the son of Thomas Dickson, who served more than twenty years in the British army, was a sergeant in the Ninety-second Regiment of Highlanders, and played a distinguished part in the battle of Waterloo, receiving a medal for gallantry in that engagement. At different times he received four other medals for meritorious action. James was born in Scotland and was an intimate friend of Sir Walter Scott. In 1832, the cholera breaking out in Scotland, he and other families in the neighborhood, emigrated to Canada. After two years in Toronto, the family came to Pennsylvania and settled in the iron and coal districts at Dundaff, six miles above Carbondale, residing on a farm while the father worked at his trade in New York. In 1836 he secured employment with the Delaware and Hudson Canal Company at Carbondale, and was named Superintendent of the Machine Shop, a position he held until his death in 1880. Elizabeth, his wife, was born in Berwickshire, Scotland, and died in May, 1866. She was a relative of James Hogg, the Scottish poet."

JOHN HOSIE: Born in Sterlingshire, Scotland, June 2, 1812, he was hired, in 1843. as Superintendent of Mines by James Archbald. In 1843 he engaged, under James Archbald, in the management of the Delaware and Hudson Canal Company's railroad from Carbondale to Honesdale, and during the two years he was thus employed he repaired the masonry on the company's canal. In 1845 he accepted the position of assistant superintendent, under Archbald, of

the Delaware and Hudson coal mines at Carbondale. John Hosie was trapped in the 1846 mine cave-in but escaped. John Hosie died November 4, 1879.

ADAM HUNTER: Adam Hunter was born in Scotland in 1834, and married Mary Lynce of Ireland. He was a sailor for about nineteen years and came to Carbondale in 1869 and was hired by the D&H to serve as the Engineer at the head of Planes Nos. 3 and 5 on the D&H Gravity Railroad.

HUGH JONES: A native of Ayrshire, Scotland, came in 1866 to Pittston, removing to Olyphant two years later to work in the Delaware and Hudson mines. There he worked until 1876, when he was appointed inside foreman of the White Oak colliery.

ARCHIBALD F. LAW: Archbald Law was born in Wanlockhead, Scotland in 1799. In Scotland he trained and worked as a shaft sinker and mining engineer. In 1830, he emigrated to the United States and settled in Carbondale, Pennsylvania, where he was employed by the Delaware and Hudson Coal Company as a shaft sinker and mining engineer. In June 1831, under the direction of Archibald F. Law, the D&H opened, in Carbondale, the first deep underground anthracite shaft mine in America [emphasis added]. He was elected justice of the peace in 1846 and served as such until his death in June, 1848, at the age of 48 years.

THOMAS LAW: Thomas Law, mine foreman, was born March 20th, 1847, in Scotland, and came to this country when a child, his parents settling in Dunmore, PA. His first work in connection with mining was acting as weighmaster for the Pennsylvania Coal Company at Dunmore. Coming to Archbald in 1860, he served as weighmaster at the White Oak colliery until 1870, when he was promoted to his present position, that of outside foreman.

JOHN LOVE: Born in Scotland, he emigrated to and bought his family here, settling in Carbondale, where he became a pattern maker for the Delaware and Hudson Company and continued in that position until his death"

JAMES H. McALPINE: First Superintendent of the D&H Machine Shop at Carbondale.

SILAS K. McMULLEN: Born in 1809 in Pleasant Mount. As early as 1827, he was in the employ of the Delaware & Hudson Canal Company in the construction of the original Gravity Railroad. He was killed accidentally while running a stationary engine on the Gravity Railroad.

WILLIAM J. McMULLEN: He served as master of the trade and transportation department of the Delaware and Hudson Canal Company's railroad. He was born March 12, 1844, in Clinton Township, PA. He served as the Honesdale Branch Trainmaster, and was instantly killed, while returning from a tour of inspection, by Engine No. 53, at Panther Bluff, when he got off the engine to throw a switch. He had been in the service of the Delaware and Hudson company continuously since he was sixteen years of age. He was first employed on the coal dump in Waymart and finally through strict attention to business and his unusual capacity for railroading rose to the position of trainmaster of the Gravity railroad system, a position which he held for twenty years.

ANDREW NICOL: Andrew Nicol has seen the longest service with the Delaware & Hudson Coal Company of any man in their employ, having held one position for forty-five years. Born in the lowlands of Scotland, in the parish of New Daily, Ayr, August 20, 1817, he is a son of John, of the same locality, and grandson of David Nicol, who was a shepherd. In 1851, Andrew Nicol came to America, settling eventually in Carbondale, where he was hired as a surveyor in the Delaware & Hudson mines. In 1870, he was appointed Inspector of Mines by Governor John W. Gary.

JAMES NICOL, mine foreman, is a native of Scotland, and came to America when nineteen years old (a brother of Andrew Nicol, see above). He was engaged in railroad contracting and mining in 1852. He was named inside superintendent of Eddy Brook colliery in 1877, and later at the White Oak mine, Archbald.

FINLEY ROSS: He was assistant superintendent of the coal department, Delaware & Hudson Canal Company, and a prominent Republican of Scranton. He was born in Ayrshire, Scotland, in 1839, the son of Nathaniel and Janet (Frazier) Ross, also of that shire. In 1860 he came to Scranton and engaged as a machinist with the Delaware & Hudson Canal Company, becoming inside foreman at Leggett's Creek shaft. Later he was traveling assistant superintendent, then foreman, and in 1893 was promoted to be assistant superintendent of the coal department, Delaware & Hudson Canal Company.

ALEXANDER SHANNON: born in Dumfries, Scotland, July 12, 1825, he grew to manhood on the home farm, where he acquired a broad knowledge of landscape design and maintenance. He came to America in 1850 and after a short time secured work on the Delaware & Hudson Canal Company's railroad. Working for the Wurts Brothers, he designed and planted Hendrick Park, Carbondale. From 1870 to 1893, he worked for Van Bergen company. Alexander Shannon's son, William, born May 10, 1863, worked for several years in the freight department of the Delaware & Hudson Canal Company. A substantial apartment block, the Shannon Block, stands today on North Main Street in Carbondale.

GEORGE SIMPSON: Pioneer coal operator of Archbald, he was born in Dumfries, Scotland, on November 12, 1823, and died in Archbald at the age of 60, his earthly remains are interred in Maplewood Cemetery, Carbondale. In 1857, the coal firm of Eaton & Co. was organized, the managers of which were Alver Eaton, George Simpson, and Edward Jones.

ANDREW SMITH comes from a long line of sturdy, God-fearing Scots, noted for their honorable dealings with all men and their unquestioning allegiance to whatever they believe to be the true and right. The birth of Andrew Smith took place in Deanhead, Haddington, Scotland, June 25, 1849, and his first years were passed in Pennston. He was only ten years old when he began working in the mines. There were then no modern appliances and the miners were obliged to slide down a rope from three hundred to five hundred feet. It was his duty to push the cars to the foot of the shaft, but as time went on, he became a practical miner and was promoted to be assistant foreman when he was only twenty years old. In 1872 he was made mine foreman at Fountain Hall, remaining there eight years. In 1884 he came to Pennsylvania and found employment with Linderman & Skeer as a miner in their Hazleton collieries and worked there until 1887, when he became outside foreman for Thomas Waddell. Soon he was given the place of inside foreman with the Mount Jessup Coal Company, having his home in Winton at this time. For a year or more

he worked for the Delaware & Hudson Canal Company at Grassy Island, and then, for seven years, he worked as inside foreman at the Marvine shaft with the same firm.

JAMES VANNAN: Engineer at Plane No. 1 on the D&H Gravity Railroad from 1860 to the closing of the road in 1899. He was born in Glasgow, Scotland, in 1834, and married Euphemia Harris, of New Jersey. He came to Carbondale in the fall of 1845.

JOHN WHYTE: Born in Dumfries-shire, Scotland, he came to America in 1869, and settled in Ransom township, removing, in 1870 to Archbald. He was weighmaster at the Eaton colliery until 1878, when he was appointed outside foreman.

ANDREW WYLLIE: Superintendent of the iron department of the D&H blacksmith shops at Carbondale. He was born in Scotland and came to Carbondale in 1851, where he married Isabella Diack.

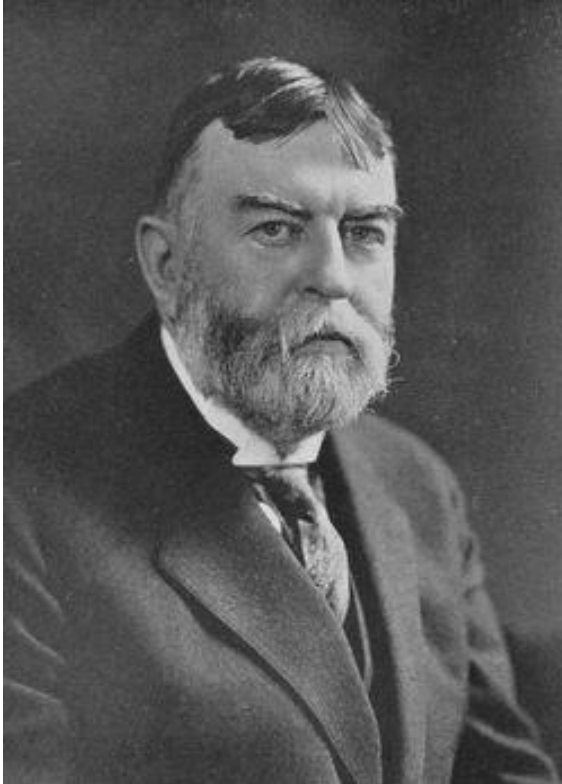
LEONOR FRESNEL LOREE: As we were preparing to send this article to the BLHS, it occurred to us that another major figure in the history of the D&H, Leonor Fresnel Loree (D&H President 1907-1938) might well have an English or Scottish connection, and so we re-read Chapters 11 and 12 in Shaughnessy's *Delaware & Hudson*.

Here is the very last sentence in Shaughnessy's Chapter 12: "Leonor F. Loree was many things to many people; a dynamic leader, a genius of operation and management, a wizard of finance, a kind soft-spoken man, an inventor and experimenter, a firm capable businessman, **a bearded Scotch tyrant** [emphasis added], a man with a final and dogmatic tongue, a ruthless cold-hearted despot—hated by some, loved by others, but remembered by all." (Jim Shaughnessy, *Delaware & Hudson*, p. 315) Genealogical Note: The Loree family, we learned on-line, was established and prominent in America, Scotland, and Canada, between 1840 and 1920. The most Loree families were found in the USA in 1880. In 1840, there were 9 Loree families living in New Jersey (where half of the Lorees in America lived).

WORDS OF APPRECIATION, AND MORE SCOTS: On April 12, Bill McColl sent the following note to Jim Bachorz (who forwarded Bill McColl's note to S. R. Powell): "We were delightfully entertained by Robert Powell's article about the D&H's Scottish heritage. As an old Schenectady kid, we grew up in the backyard of the D&H and ALCO confluence. At the time, the American Locomotive Company had Scottish leadership as well. Duncan Fraser and Robert McColl (not related for at least the past 200 years) were both Presidents of the organization. I have a large trunk in my parlor under the piano lettered for *R B McColl*. It has stickers on it that indicated Montreal, which likely means D&H travel. Since my late partner was also Gwen Fraser, it seems like birds of a feather do in fact flock together. In any event, please thank Mr. Powell for his efforts. [signed] William McColl"

S. R. POWELL'S RESPONSE TO BILL MCCOLL: (whose father came over to the USA in 1928 from Dumbarton, Scotland): "I am very pleased to learn that you were 'delightfully entertained' by Part 1 of my two-part article on the D&H's Scottish heritage. I am also very pleased to learn about the Scottish leadership of the American Locomotive Company, of which both Duncan Fraser and Robert B. McColl (not related to you for at least the past 200 years) were both

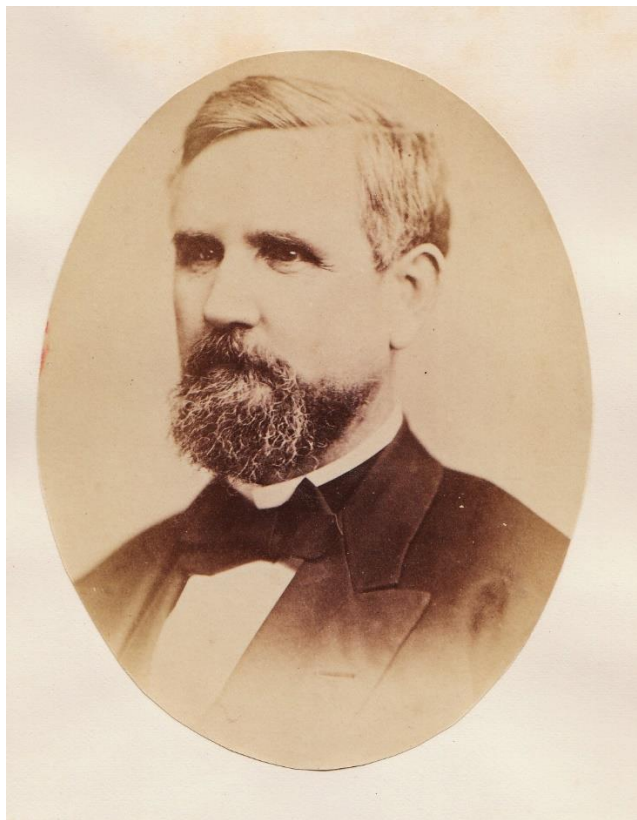
Presidents of the organization. Hopefully my article on the D&H 's Scottish heritage will result in many more D&H Scots coming forward. Allow me to note here (1) that my mother descended from the Russell and Gillespie families of Scotland (with some English blood in her veins as well), and (2) that my father was one-hundred percent Welsh and that his maternal grandfather was the Welsh bard *Athenydd*.”



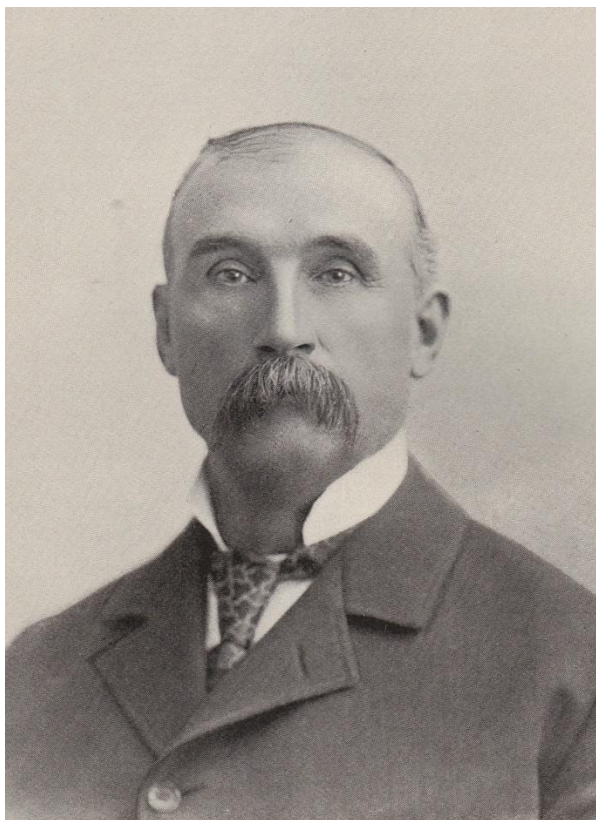
Leonor F. Loree



Archibald Law



Thomas Dickson



William McMullen

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